

WAVE Scholarship Launches for 2023

PRESENTED BY: Marina Parr, Workforce Board

CHECK ONE:

☐ Action Item

☐ Possible Action

☒ Discussion Only

SUMMARY:

The 2023 Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) Scholarship launched on February 1, with an application deadline of March 17. This merit-based scholarship is overseen by the Workforce Board and was recently restarted last year after a 10-year hiatus following the Great Recession. The scholarship, which pays as much as two years tuition, is aimed at high-performing career and technical education students at both the high school and college level. Up to 147 students are eligible to win an award—three from every legislative district.

BACKGROUND:

WAVE is a long-standing, highly regarded scholarship aimed at high-performing CTE students. The Workforce Board has administered the award for decades, starting in the mid-1980s. WAVE was suspended following the Great Recession. After more than 10 years the Legislature funded it again and directed the Workforce Board to quickly relaunch it in 2022 to qualifying students. Following last year's super-quick restart, Workforce Board staff have worked to smooth out the application process and get the application online earlier and for a longer period. The application is housed on the WashBoard.org website, an older scholarship platform overseen by the Washington Student Achievement Council. WSAC, the state's financial aid agency, distributes WAVE funds to qualifying students. The older site has made it more difficult for students to submit their applications and for staff to retrieve those applications so they can be readily scored by committees made up of industry representatives, educators, agency staff, and community members.

This presentation will bring the Board up to speed on the status of this year's WAVE award application cycle, including current challenges—from how much money is available for the 2023 award to plans to host the site on a more modern platform.

STAFF GUIDANCE & RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion only.